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DEPT FOR EUR/DAS MATTHEW BRYZA

E.O. 12958: DECL: 09/07/2016

TAGS: PREL PHUM PGOV AJ

SUBJECT: AZERBAIJAN: FM MAMMADYAROV SAYS DUE TO VOTE SWAP,
GOAJ COMMITTED TO VENEZUELA (ON FIRST ROUND)

Classified By: Ambassador Anne. E. Derse, Reasons 1.4(b,d)

¶1. (C) In a September 7 phone conversation with Ambassador, FM Mammadyarov said that, on the Venezuela/Guatemala UNSC question, the GOAJ had in fact long ago traded its vote to Venezuela in exchange for Venezuela's vote for Azerbaijan for the new Human Rights Council. Venezuela did in fact vote for Azerbaijan for the Human Rights Council and as such the FM said Azerbaijan felt "honor-bound" to vote for Venezuela on this issue. However, he added that should the voting go past the first round, as it might due to Ecuador's candidacy for the seat, this might provide a 'way out,' as the GOAJ would have fulfilled its obligations to Venezuela by its first-round vote and would not be bound to vote for it in subsequent rounds. He added that in his view Venezuela would in any case serve as a mouthpiece for Russia.

¶2. (C) COMMENT: Embassy requests guidance as to whether there are subsequent actions Department wishes Embassy to take on this matter.

DERSE